Kuwait have come to notice in recent months.

(b) A group of 3 ladies and a male professor from POK falsely claiming to be from a charitable organisation raising funds for the benefit of people affected by deteriorating economic conditions in POK entered Kuwait in February, but after entry they claimed to be representatives of something called Kashmir Human Right Organisation. they used local platforms for conducting anti-India propaganda. The group has since left Kuwait.

(c) Our Ambassador in Kuwait has expressed our concern to Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry at Pakistani Embassy's misuse of Kuwaiti organisations for anti-India propaganda.

American President's visit to India

2291. SHRI G. PRATHAPPA REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Invitation has been extended to the American President Mr. Bill Cinton to visit India;

(b) if so, when was the invitation extended;

(c) what is the response of the American President on this invitation;

(d) if not, by when the invitation will be extended and what are the reasons for the delay in extending the invitation; and

(e) by when is the American President likely to visit India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Government will trasmit an invitation at an appropriate time.

(e) Does not arise.

Requirement of Ration Cards for making Passports

2292. SHRI V. RAJESHWAR RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some Passport officers have made it compulsory to submit the Ration Cards for purposes of the passports;

(b) if so, what will be the fate of those who do not have ration cards;

(c) whether any other proof of residence will be treated as valid by such passport officers;

(d) whether the names in the latest electoral rolls will also be a valid proof of residence, and

(e) what steps are being taken to simplify the procedures for the issurance of passports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) to (d) Applications for passports need to be accompanied by documentary evidence of proof of address. This could be a photocopy of the applicant's ration card or any other documentary avidence such as the appointment letter of a deputed company on letter head, water tax/telephone bill/electricity bill, running bank account etc.

(e) Government have taken a number of steps to simplify procedures for the issue of passports including supply of forms through select post offices, availability of most miscellaneous services at any Passport Offices, delivery of first-time passports in person or by post, processing of applications on a first-cum-first served basis except in genuine amergencies removal of erstwhile restriction on ravel to South Africa, issuance of a weekly press released by Passport Offices to indicate the application date being covered and streamlining of procedures with regard to lost/damaged passports.